

Summaries of articles

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SUMMARIES OF ARTICLES

Girls' and Boys' Academic Success and Gender-Specific Socialization at School

Nicole Mosconi

In this short research paper, the author critically examines the explanations generally given for girls' academic success, showing to what extent they reflect sex stereotypes. She then offers her own interpretation, which is based on strategies and attitudes towards school, teachers and peers. Her proposition is illustrated by a qualitative analysis of a primary school mathematics class, showing how teacher treatment differs for girls and boys, and how student ranking is based on gender and social origin.

Girls' Academic Success in Primary School: Factors Involved

Claudette Gagnon

In this article, the author seeks to understand why girls experience greater academic success than boys at the primary school level; why they post lower failure rates, fall behind less, and are less likely to repeat a grade. Her goal is to describe and analyze how and why girls are more successful, and to show the potential impact of gender-specific social relationships in primary school on girls' academic success. The author also highlights the existence of a form of feminism at the primary level. Data analysis has shown that girls may be encouraged more actively to succeed in school. The efforts made by girls themselves, combined with those of their mothers, create a dynamic which promotes academic success. Not only do they adapt to the school environment in order to perform better, they adopt certain behavioural strategies to achieve their objectives. They want to prove that they are "good" at school and show boys, who confine them to stereotyped models, what they are capable of. A successful future as women is also a source of motivation for girls and their mothers.

Gender and the Educational Achievements of Immigrant Children: An Exploratory Study

Anette Goldberg-Salinas and Claude Zaidman

Although a number of studies have examined the educational achievements of immigrant children in France, they have generally been conducted by school specialists, focusing on social and gender-based inequality, with little interest in "ethnicization" processes, or immigration specialists, concentrating on social inequality and "ethnicization/racialization" in school, paying little attention to gender issues. This article proposes a dynamic, cross-sectional, interdisciplinary, comparative approach based on social origin and the social construction of categories according to gender, race and ethnic origin. This study reviews the literature on immigrant children and education produced in the social sciences. It includes an analytic assessment of women's contribution to the literature on immigration, reviews existing statistical data, and presents a recent exploratory field study.

The Interaction Between Gender, Race and Social Origin and Representations of Teacher-Student Relationships

Caroline Hamel

This article deals with the interrelationships between inequality based on gender, race and social origin in education. The author presents the findings of a study which shows, after

statistical analysis, that the teacher-student relationships perceived by students from different cultural communities are structured by gender and class. Girls whose parents are less educated often have more negative perceptions than boys with same background or girls from a more educated milieu, thus revealing the reductionism inherent in taking only one variable into account in situating groups socially.

A Revised View of Women's Career Development

Armelle Spain, Lucille Bédard and Lucie Paiement

Despite women's increased presence on the labour market in a wider variety of fields than ever before, and despite the career-related concerns voiced by women, career guidance and management services often offer them measures based primarily on male models. There is a need for theoretical models and counselling programs which correspond to women's needs, the choices and challenges they must deal with, and the means they use to do so. This has been the authors' priority for the past two decades, leading to a design based on three theoretical elements: the relational dimension, overall outlook on life and career path complexity. This article begins by presenting a summary of the authors' findings on the nature and role of the relational dimension in women's career development (basic research), and then describes and evaluates the careers education program "Devenir" created by them, based on a revised theoretical perspective (applied research). It concludes with a discussion of the study's limits and contributions.

The Goals and Careers of Male and Female University Graduates (Bachelor's Degree)

Renée Cloutier, Claude Trottier and Louise Laforce

This qualitative study examines how men and women who graduated from a Québec university with a bachelor's degree in 1986 perceive the link between their careers and their personal goals. In all, 61 interviews were conducted in 1994. The article attempts to answer the following questions: Eight years after having obtained their bachelor's degree, how do women define their life goals in relation to the labour market entry process? Do their representations differ depending on whether they have children? Which group of women seems to have best reconciled all of their life goals? Do they enjoy particular working conditions? Does the situation of their male colleagues differ from that of women? The study is part of a research project aimed understanding the labour market entry process of university graduates. The study's conclusion emphasizes the importance of taking into account the relational dimension of unpaid work to understand the employment process as it relates to women.

Freedom and Constraints Experienced by Women Faculty Members: A Feminist Critical Analysis of Organizational Culture

Claire Lapointe

This article addresses the situation of women faculty members in Québec from the standpoint of women working within an organization in traditionally male positions, using a feminist critical approach to the theory of organizational culture as the analysis framework. Using ethnographic methodology and the data saturation levels technique, the author interviewed 34 women professors from Laval University. The data obtained point to Laval's relatively rigid organizational culture in terms of the freedom faculty members enjoy in defining their roles and carrying out their duties. Although women faculty members stated that they are satisfied with the leeway they enjoy, its limits are readily apparent, the prime

constraints being: a feeling of invisibility, a perception of sexism and systemic discrimination, physical insecurity, and conflict between personal and organizational values and interests. Despite these limits, the majority of women faculty members indicated that they had developed strategies allowing them to make and take their place within the university.

Social and Gender-based Mobility: The Case of Women Administrators in the University Context

Claudine Baudoux

This article presents the findings of quantitative and qualitative research targeting women administrators in Québec universities. The study shows that some women administrators experience intergenerational mobility (male administrators overridingly experience social mobility) and that many women administrators experience gender-based mobility.

An Innovative Instructional System Design Model

Jeanne d'Arc Gaudet

In this article, the author describes some of the findings of a quasi-experimental study conducted for her doctoral thesis. One of the study hypotheses is that the average post-test scores (steps and results) of a group trained using a modified instructional system design model would be significantly higher than those of a group trained using a non-modified model. Projects completed by control and test groups (one each) were analyzed to test this hypothesis. The results showed that, when changes are proposed to the instructional system design model to meet the needs and concerns of women working in non-traditional fields, many people take these needs into account in designing learning systems.

Training and Undervaluation of Women's Work: Some Lessons for Job Evaluation in the Context of Pay Equity

Esther Déom, Diane Drouin and Jacques Mercier

The aim of the Québec Pay Equity Act, assented to in November 1996, is to eliminate that portion of the wage gap between male and female workers resulting from systemic discrimination based on prejudices against and biases regarding the value of women's work. To achieve pay equity, the law provides for the use of an analytical job evaluation method, requiring evaluators to exercise their judgment and, therefore, subject to the influence of their personal values. The article highlights the importance of training in order to eliminate gender biases in the job evaluation process. In this study, the authors examine the results of Québec Public Service employee self-evaluations, seeking two types of gender bias. The authors conclude that awareness training in discrimination and biases against women's work, and technical job evaluation training are needed to achieve genuine pay equity.

What Are Picture Books Telling Children?

Sylvie Cromer and Adela Turin

In this article, the authors describe the overall outcome of phase one of the "Attention Album!" (book alert) program on sexism in picture books for children aged 0 to 9, a European research program involving France, Italy and Spain, financed by the European

Commission, and coordinated by the European Association "Du côté des filles". Picture books are not the first form of literature to which children are exposed, and also constitute very important teaching materials in kindergarten and primary school. This is why the Association decided to verify how boys/girls and men/women were depicted in fictional works in 1994, and then analyze the impact of these images on children. The conclusions of the statistical study of these books are patently clear: a staggering majority of characters in all roles and the professions are male, female adult characters being conspicuously absent. The qualitative survey reveals that children from Paris, Montpellier (France), Salamanca (Spain) and Milan (Italy) have a heavily stereotyped perception of gender roles, and that adults –particularly men– were quite alarmed to see their sexual identity threatened through the questioning of sexism in books.

Still a Question of Rights

Gisèle Bourret

This article describes the main concerns and claims underlying the efforts of the CEQ's committee on the status of women from its creation in 1973 to the present. The author uses this historical review to show how a committee on the status of women operating within a union can help an organization grapple with the problems facing women in all aspects of their lives, based on the assertion underlying radical feminism, that even our private lives are political. Not all of the struggles waged by the CEQ's committee on the status of women have been equally successful. Some issues, such as parental rights and pay equity, which were dealt with as part of a coalition, were satisfactorily resolved, whereas others, such as equal access to union representation or job parity for women, still encounter various forms of resistance. The specific nature of women's situation or women's issues continues to be problematic when establishing action priorities or presenting a common front. The current choices and challenges related to the restructuring of jobs and the economy are critical for women, particularly because they bring into clearer focus issues such as the acknowledgment of the free or invisible work done by women, and the need for balance or continuity between women's private and public lives. For education to continue being a genuine tool for the emancipation of women, it must enable all men and women to strike a balance and achieve harmony throughout all areas of human activity. At a time when market forces alone appear to rule the world, groups of women in all sectors of society must work together more than ever to preserve what they have gained, defend their rights, and propose alternatives based on equality, justice and respect for human dignity.

Employment Equity in the School Boards: A Look at a Traditionally Female Sector

Francine Bélanger

In 1995, the school boards' equal opportunity advisory committee, created at the request of the Centrale de l'enseignement du Québec (CEQ), addressed the issue of equal access. In keeping with the procedure advocated in the Regulation respecting affirmative action programs, the Committee's first step was to outline the situation of women employed in the school boards. The author's statistical report on women employed in the school boards presents several facets of the situation of women in the education sector in 1993-1994. Traditionally, this sector is marked by a predominantly female workforce, and women's under-representation in administrative positions. Women teachers, administrators and non-teaching professionals hold more precarious and part-time positions than their male colleagues. English schools differ from French schools in that women are better represented among administrative personnel and non-teaching professionals.

Women's Studies Programs and the Teaching of Feminist Organization in French-speaking Ontario

Jacinthe Michaud

This article examines and discusses two problems that surfaced in the teaching of feminist organization to students enrolled in the Women's Studies Program at Glendon College (York University, Ontario). The first problem is related to teaching about the women's movement itself, the social space it occupies and its relations with the State. The second is related to interaction with women and learning about inclusion and diversity. Based on a course discussing studies of women's groups and community work in French-speaking Ontario, the author presents students' resistance to learning about these issues, a resistance which represents challenges for women's studies programs as a whole.

Feminist Studies in Québec Universities

Chantal Doré

The purpose of this article is to discuss issues in feminist studies in relation to the recent creation of the Réseau des études féministes universitaires du Québec (REFUQ), a network for feminist studies in Québec universities. The author describes the status of feminist studies in universities and the types of programs of studies offered in Québec. She underscores two issues in university-level feminist studies: strategies for designing and implementing feminist studies structures, and the new generation of university-level feminist research and studies.

The FQPPU Committee on Women University Professors

Joseph-Claude Poulin

When founded in 1991, the Québec federation of university professors (FQPPU) created a standing committee mandated to study issues related to the status and working conditions of women faculty members. A brief overview of this committee's history shows that its top priority has been the issue of equal access. More recently, the committee analyzed the clauses referring to women in the collective agreements of all Federation union members.

Bibliographic Compilation of References of French-language Writings in the Social Sciences, Humanities and Economics on the Theme of "Women and Education" (1991-1998)

Carmen Gloria Muñoz, Yolande Taillon and Renée Cloutier

This article constitutes a bibliographic compilation of references of French-language writings, published between 1991 and 1998. The references focus on the subject of "women and education" and "women, education and social development". The 206 references compiled were taken from two computerized versions of the FRANCIS database: the CD-ROM version, produced by the Institut de l'information scientifique et Technique, a division of the Centre national de la recherche scientifique (INIST-CNRS) in Paris, which covers 1991-1996, and the Internet version, produced by INIST-CNRS and the Getty Information Institute (GII), which covers 1997-1998.